

1 Q. So, you were -- I want to make sure I have this 09:52:49AM
2 right. So, you would have been the pop culture reporter 09:52:53AM
3 on pop culture writer for The Times from about 2000 to 09:52:56AM
4 2008? 09:53:01AM

5 A. Yes.

6 Q. So, was it a big shift for you then to move to 09:53:03AM
7 the Metro general assignment desk and not be able to do 09:53:06AM
8 that same level of pop culture writing? 09:53:09AM

9 A. Yes.

10 Q. Was it difficult? 09:53:13AM

11 A. Well, it was difficult in that the managers 09:53:14AM
12 weren't very good at using the right tool for the job. 09:53:17AM
13 And so we all, when we're hired as reporters, have skill 09:53:21AM
14 sets, things that we're good at and have proven, 09:53:25AM
15 demonstrated expertise at and skill at. And one of the 09:53:29AM
16 difficult things about going to Metro news was just sort 09:53:34AM
17 of being treated like a gofer sometimes. 09:53:38AM

18 Q. What do you mean by that? 09:53:40AM

19 A. Just thrown at things willy-nilly regardless of 09:53:43AM
20 what my own skills were. 09:53:47AM

21 Q. So, do you feel like your skills were 09:53:51AM
22 underutilized? 09:53:55AM

23 A. To say the least. 09:53:55AM

24 Q. Tell me about that. Tell me a little bit more 09:53:56AM
25 about what your feeling was about being underutilized. 09:54:00AM

A. Well, I just -- a good deal of the time I was
thrown at things in the way an intern would be with no
regard for what my demonstrated and widely praised work
was.

5 Q. What do you view as your sort of highest and 09:54:22AM
6 best use in a newsroom environment? 09:54:25AM

[illegible]

9	Q. Well, you've said that you weren't being	09:54:37AM
10	utilized for your talents. So, what do you think would	09:54:39AM
11	have been the way that the managers should have been	09:54:43AM
12	utilizing you?	09:54:46AM

13 A. Should have been? Well, at that time we were 09:54:47AM
14 sorely lacking in any kind of pop culture coverage where 09:54:51AM
15 Seattle is at the epicenter of a great deal of that, and 09:54:58AM
16 our lack of it was conspicuous, and I was constantly 09:55:04AM
17 pitching for something relating to that that the paper 09:55:10AM
18 needed and that I was good at, a good fit. 09:55:14AM

19 Q. So, you wanted to continue doing the pop 09:55:17AM
20 culture writing after you moved over to the general 09:55:19AM
21 assignment desk? 09:55:22AM

22 A. In one form or another. I thought it was 09:55:23AM
23 something the paper needed and I thought it was something 09:55:26AM
24 that I was good at. 09:55:29AM

25 Q. Did you propose that to anybody, any editors? 09:55:31AM

1	A. Numerous times. Sorry, I talked over you.	09:55:34AM
2	Numerous times.	09:55:37AM
3	Q. What was the response?	09:55:38AM
4	A. I think I can sum up the response as no.	09:55:40AM
5	Q. Did anyone provide you a reason for why they	09:55:44AM
6	wouldn't support you doing pop culture writing on the	09:55:51AM
7	general assignment desk?	09:55:56AM
8	A. No good reason. It was just along the lines of	09:55:58AM
9	this isn't what we want you to focus on right now. In	09:56:04AM
10	fact, I even offered to do things on my own time that	09:56:09AM
11	didn't interfere with my scheduled in Metro news and was	09:56:16AM
12	even told that I couldn't do that, and given no reason	09:56:19AM
13	why.	09:56:22AM
14	Q. You were considered a nonexempt employee,	09:56:24AM
15	correct?	09:56:28AM
16	A. I don't know what that means.	09:56:28AM
17	Q. Were you -- well, let me strike that. I'll	09:56:30AM
18	come back to that.	09:56:37AM
19	A. Can I get a refill here?	09:56:39AM
20	Q. Sure.	09:56:41AM
21	THE WITNESS: Oh, thanks. Okay.	09:56:45AM
22	Q. Did you feel like going to the --	09:56:54AM
23	MS. SULLIVAN WEISS: I'll give them a minute.	09:57:00AM
24	THE WITNESS: Thanks.	09:57:02AM
25	Q. Did you feel like going to become a general	09:57:17AM

1 assignment reporter on the Metro desk was sort of a step 09:57:23AM
 2 down after being the pop culture writer for eight years? 09:57:26AM
 3 A. In a way. 09:57:30AM
 4 Q. Why is that? 09:57:31AM
 5 A. Because I was doing very distinctive, well- 09:57:33AM
 6 praised popular work prior to that, and then I was put in 09:57:36AM
 7 a situation where, as I said, I was more often than not 09:57:40AM
 8 just treated like an intern and just kind of used like a 09:57:43AM
 9 spare body with no regard for my demonstrated skills. 09:57:49AM
 10 Q. How did that make you feel? 09:57:53AM
 11 A. Are my feelings at issue here? I don't 09:57:55AM
 12 understand. 09:57:59AM
 13 Q. How did that make you feel when you were saying 09:57:59AM
 14 -- you say that you were used like a gofer or intern? 09:58:01AM
 15 A. It was frustrating. 09:58:04AM
 16 Q. Did that affect your happiness in your job? 09:58:06AM
 17 A. Of course. 09:58:12AM
 18 Q. Okay. During the time that you were on the 09:58:13AM
 19 Metro general assignment desk and experiencing some 09:58:28AM
 20 displeasure with your job or feeling like you were a gofer 09:58:32AM
 21 or intern, did you look for jobs either outside of the 09:58:35AM
 22 Metro general assignment reporter job or outside of The 09:58:39AM
 23 Seattle Times? 09:58:45AM
 24 A. I didn't make any serious attempts to look for 09:58:45AM
 25 other work because to some extent I still considered 09:58:49AM

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1 myself kind of a lifer at The Times. I had always said 09:58:53AM

2 that I wanted to retire from that place. 09:58:57AM

3 Having said that, I was working on a comic book 09:58:59AM

4 at the time and, you know, I was open to that turning into 09:59:03AM

5 something else, and there had been some TV interest in it 09:59:06AM

6 and I sent a query to Comedy Central, but I had never put 09:59:10AM

7 in a serious effort to get work elsewhere before I left 09:59:19AM

8 because I still loved the place. 09:59:24AM

9 Q. So, I think you've touched on this a little 09:59:26AM

10 bit, but I want to make sure I understand. When you're 09:59:29AM

11 talking about doing the pop culture writing in the 09:59:31AM

12 features department, that's different than breaking news, 09:59:34AM

13 right? 09:59:38AM

14 A. There's some news in that, but yeah, it's 09:59:39AM

15 largely different. I mean, you have beats that you know 09:59:42AM

16 and not so much as breaking, because you're aware of 09:59:47AM

17 what's going on and preparing for anything that happens 09:59:51AM

18 because you're an expert in your field. 09:59:53AM

19 Q. So, when you went over to the general 09:59:55AM

20 assignment desk, you were now working on sort of whatever 09:59:57AM

21 the news of the day was; is that correct? 10:00:00AM

22 A. Mostly. 10:00:04AM

23 Q. So, when you left the office on Tuesday and 10:00:05AM

24 come back on Monday -- sorry, come back on Wednesday, you 10:00:07AM

25 may not have any idea what the day will hold in terms of 10:00:11AM

1 stories or what you need to do; is that correct? 10:00:15AM

2 A. A lot of times. There were some ongoing things 10:00:17AM

3 that I would be working on from time to time, but those 10:00:20AM

4 would be tossed aside if anything else happened to take me 10:00:23AM

5 off it. 10:00:27AM

6 Q. That didn't happen very often when you were 10:00:28AM

7 doing pop culture writing; is that correct? 10:00:30AM

8 A. Correct. 10:00:34AM

9 Q. So, my understanding, and you can correct me 10:00:42AM

10 here if I'm wrong, was that on the Metro desk, most 10:00:45AM

11 reporters or many reporters are assigned to beats; is that 10:00:49AM

12 right? 10:00:52AM

13 A. Many are. 10:00:52AM

14 Q. Then there are some that are called general 10:00:54AM

15 assignment reporters, which is what you were doing, 10:00:56AM

16 correct? 10:00:59AM

17 A. Yes.

18 Q. So, did you ever explore or talk to your 10:01:01AM

19 editors about being assigned to a beat instead of general 10:01:04AM

20 assignment? 10:01:07AM

21 A. I was just told that that was all there was for 10:01:10AM

22 me. I'm trying to think. I mean, I find it impossible to 10:01:13AM

23 believe that I didn't discuss that with anybody because at 10:01:26AM

24 least having a beat would have alleviated some of the 10:01:30AM

25 frustrations, but I can't think of specifics right at this 10:01:34AM

1 instant. 10:01:38AM

2 Q. Okay. Well, if you think of anything else 10:01:38AM

3 today, you'll let me know, please. 10:01:41AM

4 A. Yes. 10:01:43AM

5 Q. Mr. Rahner, I see that you have a notepad and 10:01:53AM

6 some paper. Is that anything -- what is the paper that 10:01:56AM

7 you brought with you today other than the blank sheet of 10:02:00AM

8 paper? 10:02:02AM

9 A. It's just a copy of the EEOC complaint that I 10:02:03AM

10 believe you have a copy of in case I thought I needed to 10:02:06AM

11 refresh my memory on anything. You're welcome to make a 10:02:09AM

12 copy of it. 10:02:12AM

13 Q. Okay. We will make a copy of that during a 10:02:14AM

14 break. 10:02:17AM

15 A. Sure. 10:02:18AM

16 Q. Describe for me how the Metro desk works as a 10:02:25AM

17 general assignment reporter in your experience. 10:02:30AM

18 A. How it works? 10:02:34AM

19 Q. How do you get your work? How do you block out 10:02:35AM

20 your day? How do you get assignments? Do you generate 10:02:38AM

21 assignments or generate stories? 10:02:42AM

22 A. More often than not I'd be given an assignment 10:02:46AM

23 based on what was going on or an idea an editor had to 10:02:50AM

24 fill the next day's paper. I would try to generate 10:02:57AM

25 assignments of my own when possible, but that was the 10:03:00AM

1 exception and not the rule. 10:03:04AM

2 Q. So, how are -- when did you get your 10:03:07AM

3 assignments? How does that work? 10:03:11AM

4 A. Either when I came in or the night before, 10:03:14AM

5 depending on the circumstances, depending on what was 10:03:17AM

6 happening at the time or the day before. There were quite 10:03:20AM

7 a number of variations on how you would begin an 10:03:27AM

8 assignment. 10:03:30AM

9 Q. So, would Matt Kreamer typically be the person 10:03:31AM

10 who would come in and talk to you about an assignment? 10:03:34AM

11 A. Generally. 10:03:36AM

12 Q. Were there ever any like meetings with the 10:03:37AM

13 reporters and the editors where you talked about who's 10:03:41AM

14 going to do what assignments during a particular day? 10:03:44AM

15 A. That's a fairly routine occurrence. 10:03:47AM

16 Q. Tell me about that. Does that happen on a 10:03:49AM

17 daily basis? 10:03:54AM

18 A. Group meetings? No, not daily. 10:03:58AM

19 Q. Weekly? 10:04:01AM

20 A. I's haphazard. It depends on events going on 10:04:02AM

21 at the time. 10:04:06AM

22 Q. Okay. So, when would those meetings take place 10:04:06AM

23 typically? 10:04:14AM

24 A. You mean in addition to what I just said about 10:04:15AM

25 them being haphazard depending on what's going on at the 10:04:18AM

1 time? 10:04:22AM

2 Q. What time of day? 10:04:23AM

3 A. No set time. 10:04:24AM

4 Q. So, are those meetings more common where 10:04:27AM

5 there's some kind of breaking news event, is that 10:04:31AM

6 typically where that would happen? 10:04:33AM

7 A. Yeah, I think so. Otherwise you just 10:04:35AM

8 individually would check in with your editor. 10:04:38AM

9 Q. And do you recall what hours Matt worked, Matt 10:04:49AM

10 Kreamer? 10:04:55AM

11 A. I think he worked different shifts on different 10:04:55AM

12 days, but I don't recall his specific schedule. There 10:04:59AM

13 were days that he left early, days that he stayed late, 10:05:05AM

14 and I don't know what his overall schedule was. 10:05:09AM

15 Q. So, when you started over at the Metro desk, 10:05:16AM

16 you were starting to tell me about how you tried to 10:05:19AM

17 incorporate some of that pop culture reporting or your 10:05:21AM

18 expertise in pop culture into the role; is that correct? 10:05:26AM

19 A. Yes. 10:05:29AM

20 Q. You described the Q-and-A pieces? 10:05:30AM

21 A. Uh-huh, yes. 10:05:35AM

22 Q. You also talked about video reporting or videos 10:05:36AM

23 that you created? 10:05:40AM

24 A. Yeah, I made a series of short videos, yes. 10:05:42AM

25 Q. Did you ever talk about a pop culture blog? 10:05:46AM

1	A.	Yes.	
2	Q.	Is that something that ever went anywhere?	10:05:50AM
3	A.	No.	10:05:53AM
4	Q.	Who did you talk to about the pop culture blog?	10:05:56AM
5	A.	Mainly Kreamer.	10:06:00AM
6	Q.	Was there -- was there interest in it from	10:06:02AM
7		Kreamer?	10:06:06AM
8	A.	Not really. I mean, as opposed to him just	10:06:09AM
9		passing it up the chain, chain of command.	10:06:14AM
10	Q.	So, other than doing the Q-and-A pieces, the	10:06:21AM
11		video reporting, you -- the rest of your time was spent	10:06:25AM
12		doing the general assignment news reporting, correct?	10:06:29AM
13	A.	Correct, for the most part.	10:06:33AM
14	Q.	We talked a little bit about getting story	10:06:45AM
15		assignments versus thinking up your own story ideas. Am I	10:06:49AM
16		correct in saying that when you come up with your own	10:06:55AM
17		story ideas, those are enterprise pieces or enterprise	10:06:58AM
18		reporting, is that the right term in your view?	10:07:01AM
19	A.	I don't have the definition of enterprise	10:07:06AM
20		reporting handy. But it just tended to be something that	10:07:09AM
21		wasn't breaking news. And it was -- well, that's mainly	10:07:12AM
22		as I understood it.	10:07:19AM
23	Q.	So, in your view, enterprise reporting isn't	10:07:20AM
24		about who generates the story, but it's about whether it's	10:07:23AM
25		something that is breaking news or something that is more	10:07:26AM

1 A. You could do a byline count, but I couldn't 10:08:45AM
2 tell you off the top of my head, because there were long 10:08:48AM
3 ones, short ones, things that required days or weeks, 10:08:51AM
4 things that I could turn around in an hour or a day, 10:08:55AM
5 briefs. 10:08:58AM
6 Q. So, it's not the type of thing that you keep 10:08:59AM
7 track of? 10:09:01AM
8 A. Not a mental calculation, no. But it's easy to 10:09:03AM
9 do a byline count in the newsroom's computer system. 10:09:08AM
10 Q. Okay. So, during the time that you were a 10:09:13AM
11 general assignment reporter, can you estimate the number 10:09:15AM
12 of stories that you did that were your own ideas? 10:09:18AM
13 A. I couldn't possibly. 10:09:20AM
14 Q. So, at the time that you were assigned -- 10:09:38AM
15 reassigned from features to Metro, do you remember talking 10:09:40AM
16 to Matt Kreamer, Jim Simon, and Mark Higgins about what 10:09:43AM
17 your role was going to be on the paper or on the Metro 10:09:49AM
18 desk? 10:09:54AM
19 A. Yes.
20 Q. Do you remember talking about the -- developing 10:09:56AM
21 the Q and As? 10:09:58AM
22 A. Well, I'd already been doing that, but they 10:09:59AM
23 they agreed at least at the time that I should continue 10:10:07AM
24 doing them. 10:10:09AM
25 Q. So, why don't you tell me what your 10:10:10AM

1	recollection is of that conversation that you had with	10:10:12AM
2	Matt Kreamer, Mark Higgins, and Jim Simon about what your	10:10:14AM
3	role would be on the Metro desk.	10:10:18AM
4	A. Essentially that I would be a Metro GA	10:10:20AM
5	reporter, but that time permitting, I would still be	10:10:24AM
6	allowed to do the Q and A.	10:10:26AM
7	Q. Do you remember talking to Matt Kreamer, Mark	10:10:30AM
8	Higgins, and Jim Simon about their expectation that you	10:10:37AM
9	would generate story ideas?	10:10:42AM
10	A. That's expected of everybody.	10:10:44AM
11	Q. Do you remember specifically having a	10:10:46AM
12	conversation with them about that during that time?	10:10:48AM
13	A. Only in the most general terms. Everybody	10:10:50AM
14	there who is a reporter is expected to try and come up	10:10:55AM
15	with story ideas when they can.	10:10:58AM
16	Q. Okay.	10:11:02AM
17	(Exhibit 1 marked.)	10:11:40AM
18	Q. The court reporter has handed you what's been	10:11:40AM
19	marked as Exhibit 1, and I'll represent to you this is an	10:11:43AM
20	email that is not sent to you, so I suspect you didn't	10:11:46AM
21	receive it at the time you were at The Times; is that	10:11:49AM
22	correct?	10:11:54AM
23	A. Can I look at it before we talk?	10:11:54AM
24	Q. Sure.	10:11:59AM
25	A. Oh, yeah, just a second. Let me get to the end	10:12:04AM

1 thought you were done. 10:21:17AM

2 Q. I have a bad habit of sort of taking a pause at 10:21:19AM

3 the end of the question, so I apologize about that. 10:21:23AM

4 A. You and Columbo. 10:21:27AM

5 Q. When did you work the evening shift while you 10:21:30AM

6 were on the Metro desk as a general assignment reporter? 10:21:32AM

7 A. Well, like all the other reporters, I had to 10:21:35AM

8 fill in occasionally on weekends. As I said, more and 10:21:39AM

9 more as the staff grew smaller. And then when the 10:21:44AM

10 reporter whose job it was became ill, I once filled in for 10:21:47AM

11 a two-week stretch. 10:21:54AM

12 Q. Do you remember when that was that you filled 10:21:55AM

13 in for the two-week stretch? 10:21:59AM

14 A. Oh, I think it must have been in the spring of 10:22:01AM

15 2010, I think. But I could be wrong. It might have been 10:22:04AM

16 in the fall of 2009. But I think it was the spring of 10:22:12AM

17 2010. 10:22:15AM

18 Q. Do you remember any -- is there any event that 10:22:16AM

19 occurred while you were on that two-week night shift that 10:22:22AM

20 would help place it in time? 10:22:24AM

21 A. No. 10:22:26AM

22 Q. There was no like big breaking news story that 10:22:27AM

23 will help us identify when you actually worked it? 10:22:30AM

24 A. It all kind of blends together. 10:22:32AM

25 Q. I understand that you worked an overnight -- 10:22:34AM

1 A. I think toward the end it had gotten down to 10:23:47AM
2 maybe once every month or six weeks, something like that. 10:23:52AM
3 Q. Then you said you covered an employee who got 10:23:58AM
4 ill; is that right? 10:24:03AM
5 A. Yes. 10:24:03AM
6 Q. Is that Charles, I'm sorry, Brown, Charles 10:24:04AM
7 Brown? 10:24:08AM
8 A. Yes.
9 Q. So, Charles Brown was the general assignment 10:24:08AM
10 Metro desk reporter assigned to the evening shift; is that 10:24:13AM
11 correct? 10:24:16AM
12 A. He was the night reporter, yes. 10:24:16AM
13 Q. And he became ill? 10:24:22AM
14 A. He had cancer. 10:24:26AM
15 Q. And you filled in for two weeks; is that right? 10:24:29AM
16 A. Yes.
17 Q. So, tell me about your experience working the 10:24:34AM
18 evening shift during that two-week period. 10:24:38AM
19 A. It was horrible. At the end of it, I was just 10:24:41AM
20 completely ragged and exhausted and my nerves were racked. 10:24:44AM
21 It was miserable. 10:24:49AM
22 Q. So, for the two-week period was it like a 10:24:56AM
23 Monday through Friday? 10:25:01AM
24 A. I think so. 10:25:04AM
25 Q. So, you would work Monday through Friday from 10:25:05AM